

## Community Challenge Grant

The innovative pilot approaches to improve children's health in King County are supported with over \$3 million of private funding that match King County's \$1 million for outreach and linkage annually in 2007, 2008, and 2009. In early 2007, Group Health Cooperative announced a \$1 million contribution to the CHI and challenged the community to double its investment through private donations followed by Washington Dental Service with a \$1 million contribution. Other contributors include: Community Health Plan, Molina Healthcare of Washington, Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Evergreen Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, Swedish Medical Center, University of Washington Medical Center, Valley Medical Center, Northwest Hospital, United Way of King County, Virginia Mason Medical Center, Washington State Hospital Association, First Choice Health, OneHealthPort, and Providence Health & Services.

The pilot programs will dovetail with the State policy priorities and include best practices in outreach and linkage, oral health quality improvement and integration, mental health integration into primary care, on-line enrollment, and financial sponsorship.

The CHI community challenge grants will fund pilot projects, starting in January 2008.

- Online enrollment. Within Reach (formerly Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies) has developed a web-based application assistance site at [www.parenthelp123.org](http://www.parenthelp123.org) for health and other social services programs, including food stamps. The CHI online enrollment work will explore a King County pilot project to create the electronic connection between the new [parenthelp123.org](http://parenthelp123.org) website and the State.
- Oral health. An oral health demonstration project funded by Washington Dental Service (WDS) will improve the delivery of oral health services to children between 250% and 300% FPL prior to the 2009 date set for this by the State and begin preparatory efforts for

a "buy in" option for families over 300% FPL.

- Mental health. A behavioral health model embedded in primary care will screen and treat for maternal depression and childhood mental health issues.

## Governance of the Children's Health Initiative

Continued guidance for the outreach activities is provided by an Outreach Implementation Committee comprised of experts in King County representing participating community-based organizations and the populations they serve. A Health Innovation Implementation Committee comprised of private sector donors, child health experts, and health care system and public health representatives provides guidance and oversight during the implementation and evaluation of the pilot projects.



# A Local Approach to Improve the Health of Low Income Children

## It is Our Intent to Improve the Health of Children in King County

The CHI is designed to surmount the barriers children face in receiving consistent access to health care services by: assertively locating and enrolling children in public health insurance programs for which they are eligible; disseminating messages about the value of early prevention and insurance in many languages; using trusted messengers from the community to deliver these messages; linking families and children to a regular source of medical and dental care; and encouraging quality integrated service delivery within clinics by utilizing case managers.

## Costs of the Uninsured

The real costs of uninsured children far exceed the costs of providing coverage because children without health insurance eventually receive care from emergency rooms or other safety net providers, where the cost of care is often greater than it would have been if these



children had received preventive care or early treatment for a health problem. Children's Hospital & Medical Center in Seattle provided \$7.5 million or 2.1 percent of revenue in charity care in 2005. The Public Health-Seattle & King County clinics provided about 3,000 primary care visits to 1,900 uninsured children in 2005 at a cost of approximately \$550,000. The community health centers in King County bear a higher financial burden; they provided care to an additional 7,000 to 9,000 uninsured children in 2005.

## Improving Access and Coverage for Children

Insured children have better access to a medical home or regular source of care, and through medical homes have better access to appropriate and timely prevention, detection and care. The California Health Status Assessment Project found that children who were enrolled in health insurance improved their school performance ("paying attention in class" and "keeping up with the school activities") by 68 percent. Improved access and coverage also brings savings. In San Mateo County, California, the Child Health Initiative program was associated with a 58 percent decline in uninsured hospital stays for children in nearby hospitals.

## For more information on King County's Child Health Initiative:

Please contact Rachel Quinn at (206) 296-4165, [rachel.quinn@kingcounty.gov](mailto:rachel.quinn@kingcounty.gov) or Susan Johnson at (206) 263-8684, [susan.johnson@kingcounty.gov](mailto:susan.johnson@kingcounty.gov).

Additional information can be found on the web at:  
[www.metrokc.gov/exec/initiatives.aspx](http://www.metrokc.gov/exec/initiatives.aspx)  
[www.metrokc.gov/health/kchap/chi.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/health/kchap/chi.htm)

Public Health  
Seattle & King County



1000M

70546.dfi.indd 12/07

The Problem

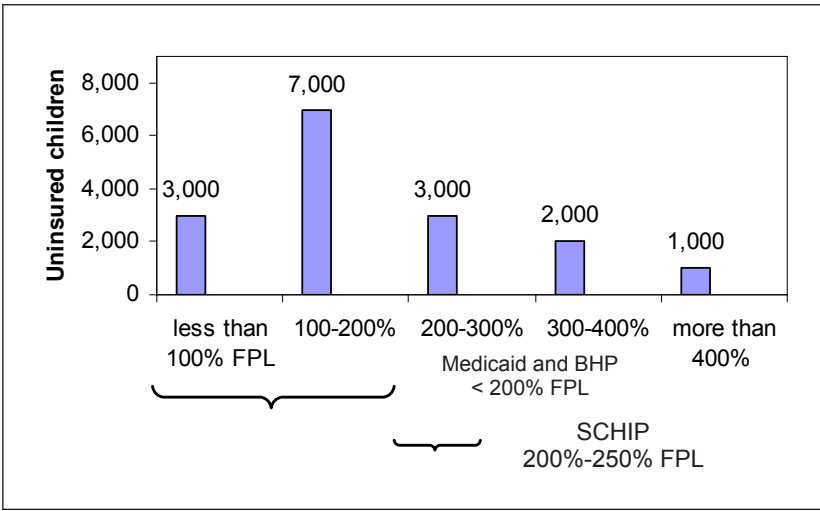
“A fundamental value throughout King County has to be that when we go to bed at night, we can rest assured that all children have access to quality health services.”

— King County Executive Ron Sims

An estimated 16,000 children in King County (4%) have no health insurance, according to 2004 survey data. More than half (about 9,000) of these children are eligible for existing publicly funded children’s health coverage. As of July 22, 2007, through the Cover All Kids law, all children in Washington State living in families with incomes up to 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL) are eligible for coverage. Starting January 2009, all children in families earning up to 300% FPL will be eligible.

Consequences of being uninsured and access to care barriers

Data show that uninsured children have less access to health care, are less likely to have a regular source of primary care or medical home and use medical and dental care less often compared to children who have insurance. Data also show that access to early preventive health care services can profoundly improve the trajectory of a child’s health and well-being and readiness for school.



Uninsured children by family income level in King County, 2004

Undiagnosed and untreated conditions that are amenable to control, cure, or prevention can affect children’s functioning and opportunities over the course of their lives.

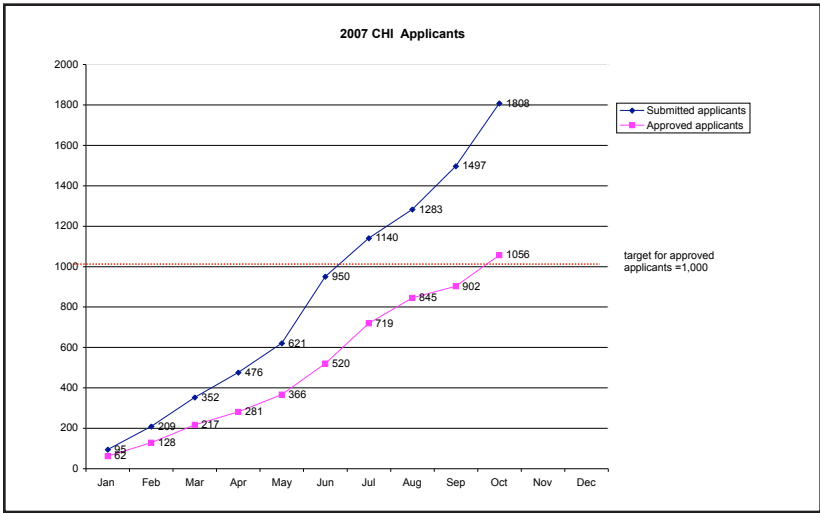
“To make a difference in children’s health, it is essential to have both health care coverage and a health care delivery system that is ready to provide early preventive services and link children to needed care.”— CHATF Final Report, 2006

Chronology

In April 2006, Executive Sims convened a Children’s Health Access Task Force (CHATF) of child health experts to advise King County on the creation of an innovative county-based children’s health program.

In June 2006, the CHATF recommended the Children’s Health Initiative (CHI), a local approach to improving the health of low-income children. The first component proactively finds, enrolls, and links eligible low-income children to medical and dental homes, needed wrap around services and integrated preventive care. The second element has been updated to consist of innovative pilot programs to improve the effectiveness of health coverage for low-income King County children.

Both the possible federal and existing state health coverage improvements make it more vital than ever to invest in local outreach and linkage activities to sign children up and make sure they have a regular doctor and dentist. Similarly, it is timely to invest in pilot programs that test new ways to improve the efficiency and performance of the health system for children.



King County Executive Ron Sims, community supporters and contributors, and CHI staff celebrate raising over \$3 million for the CHI, October 25, 2007.